REMARKS

The above listed claim amendments along with the following remarks are fully responsive to the Office Action set forth above. After entry of this Amendment, claims 1-7, 9, 11-17, and 22-24 are pending. The Examiner has indicated the allowability of claims 13 and 14.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 11, 17, and 22 are amended. Claims 24-28 are added. No issue of new matter is presented by the claim amendments or the new claims. The Examiner's objections to the claims have been addressed by the present amendments.

The present invention is a lithographic printing form precursor comprising an anodized aluminum support that has not been subjected to a chemical treatment step after anodization, and an imageable coating comprising a polymeric substance having pendent colorant groups and reversible insolubilizer groups. The imageable coating does not include a free colorant dye.

As described in the specification, an aluminum support for a lithographic printing form precursor is often treated by a post-anodic treatment ("PAT"). Commonly employed post-anodic treatments include treatment using a silicate or phosphate composition; page 1, paragraph [0003]. If no PAT is performed on the aluminum support, and if a free colorant dye is employed, then the colorant dye may form an absorbed or residual layer on the anodized surface of the support; page 3, paragraph [0005]. The absorbed or residual layer will remain after development of the lithographic printing form, and will reduce visual color contrast between exposed and unexposed areas of the printing form. Id.

The present invention addresses this problem by utilizing an imagable coating comprising polymeric substance having pendent colorant groups. The imagable coating may then be used on an aluminum support that has not been subjected to the chemical treatment step of a PAT.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-6, 9, 11, 12, 17, 22 and 23 as anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,124,425 to Nguyen ("Nguyen"). The Examiner states that Nguyen teaches all the

elements of the claimed invention, and specifically refers to Example 18 given at col. 25, lines 43-50.

It is respectfully submitted that the reference cited by the Examiner does not provide all the elements of the present invention as claimed. In Example 18 of Nguyen, a coating solution was spin-coated onto an electrolytic grained aluminum substrate, which was reported to be treated with polyvinyl phosphoric acid. It is respectfully submitted that the Nguyen specification has erroneously substituted the name "polyvinyl phosphoric acid" for "polyvinyl phosphonic acid," which is commonly used in the art of lithographic printing for post-anodic treatment.

The present invention requires that the anodized aluminum support is anodized but not subsequently subjected to a chemical treatment step. This feature of the invention is recited in each of the independent claims. In the cited example from Nguyen, treatment with polyvinyl phosphoric acid (sic) falls within the present definition of a post-anodic chemical treatment step. Treatment with polyvinyl phosphoric acid (sic) is *not* an anodization step. Therefore, the Nguyen reference cannot anticipate the present invention. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 7, 15, and 16 as unpatentable over Nguyen in view of U.S. Patent 6,074,797 to Suezawa, *et al.* ("Suezawa"), with U.S. Patent 6,447,895 to Kamir, *et al.* and U.S. Patent 6,170,292 to Boulos, *et al.* cited in support. The Examiner states that Nguyen teaches all the limitations of claims 7, 15, and 16, except for the inclusion of a pigment or an infrared-absorbing compound.

As discussed above, Nguyen cannot anticipate the claims from which claims 7, 15, and 16 depend. Furthermore, the combination of Nguyen and Suezawa does not teach or suggest using an anodized aluminum support that has been anodized but not subsequently subjected to a chemical treatment step. The present invention permits the manufacture of a lithographic printing form precursor without a post-anodic chemical treatment step. A printing form precursor can therefore be manufactured more efficiently, and with reduced usage of consumable resources. The references cited by the Examiner do not provide these

advantages. Therefore, the combination of references cited by the Examiner cannot render the claimed invention obvious. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

All pending claims are now in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

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